

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A clip comprising:

an insertion member comprising a T-shape cross-section and having a head portion and a shaft portion connected downwardly from the head portion;

a latch member comprising a V-shape, disposed on an outer side of the shaft portion; and

a hinge member connecting the shaft portion and the latch member,

wherein as the head portion is pressed, the shaft portion presses side leg portions of the latch member outwardly of the latch member to expand in diameter, and retaining pawls provided projectingly on the side leg portions of the latch member are engaged with retaining stepped portions formed in a bulged manner on a lower portion of the shaft portion to hold a state in which the latch member expands in diameter,

wherein a pair of split flanges, which are mated in a shape of a flange by surrounding the shaft portion when the side leg portions are closed, are provided to be continued from upper end portions of the side leg portions of the latch member,

wherein one side of an abutting surface of the pair of split flanges protrudes to form an L-shape in a plan view and abuts against a corresponding side portion of the shaft portion,

wherein a retaining protruding piece, which extends from a side portion thereof opposite to a protruding portion of the split flange and engages with a corresponding side portion of the shaft portion, is formed on the side leg portions, said retaining protruding piece

comprising a pawl portion extending from an end of said retaining protruding piece, and

wherein as the retaining protruding piece is engaged with the shaft portion, the split flanges are mated to form a flange surrounding the shaft portion so as to hold the shaft portion.

2. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1,

wherein second stepped portions which are superposed on top of each other are respectively formed on second abutting surfaces of the split flanges,

wherein one of the abutting surfaces, which protrudes toward the shaft portion, forms a stepped portion in which a lower side is a projection and an upper side is a recess, and

wherein another of the abutting surfaces, where the retaining protruding piece is formed, forms a stepped portion in which a lower side is a recess and an upper side is a projection.

3. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein a projection is formed on an inner side of the side leg portions at a position lower than a position where the hinge member is connected.

4. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 2, wherein a projection is formed on an inner side of the side leg portions at a position lower than a position where the hinge member is connected.

5. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, further comprising a tool groove

formed in a cut-out portion of the head portion.

6. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein the head portion comprises a peripheral edge having a tapered portion that gradually increases in thickness from a center of the head portion towards the peripheral edge of the head portion.
7. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, further comprising at least one engaging groove formed in a side wall of the shaft portion.
8. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 7, wherein said retaining protruding piece engages said engaging groove.
9. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, further comprising engaging grooves formed in opposing side walls of the shaft portion.
10. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 9, wherein each protruding piece engages with one of said engaging grooves.
11. (Currently Amended) The clip according to claim 7, wherein said ~~protruding piece~~ comprises a pawl portion which engages a surface of said engaging groove.
12. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 7, further comprising a guide projection formed on a side of the shaft adjacent the engaging groove.

13. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein an upper portion of a tip of the retaining protruding portion comprises a tapered shape.

14. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein an upper surface of the split flange comprises a lower portion and an upper portion, and

wherein a thickness of the upper portion is greater than a thickness of the lower portion of the upper surface.

15. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 14, wherein the upper surface of the split flange further comprises a gradually protruding tapered portion between the lower portion of the upper surface and the upper portion.

16. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 15, wherein the upper portion conforms to a recessed portion of the head portion and the tapered portion of the split flange conforms to a tapered portion of the head portion.

17. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein a gap is formed between the insertion member and the latch member, and

wherein said gap is sufficient to enable the insertion member to slide with respect to the latch member.

18. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein said shaft portion

comprises a substantially rectangular shape.

19. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein said head portion comprises an arc-shaped peripheral edge portion having an inversely-tapered shape and having an upper side and a lower side, and

wherein a diameter of the upper side is larger than a diameter of the lower side.

20. (Previously Presented) The clip according to claim 1, wherein said hinge is disposed along an inner side wall portion of said latch member.